

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 09-02-2004		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Operational Maneuver From the Sea and Amphibious Command Relationships: Is It time for a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander?				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Michael L. Bennett, Major, United States Marine Corps  Paper Advisor: Professor Theodore L. Gatchel				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.					
14. ABSTRACT  The Navy-Marine Corps team envisioned in Sea Power 21 has the potential to offer the future Joint Force Commander (JFC) a significant capability with the application of Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS). In order to realize this potential however, the appropriate command and control structure must be available to the JFC. In a joint community that is becoming increasingly dependant on the use of functional component commanders in the execution of major operations, the need for a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander (JFAMCC) is worthy of consideration as an organizational option. As amphibious command relationships continue to evolve, the need for a JFAMCC in addition to the Navy's Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) will be dependent on the size of the conflict, the geography of the theatre, and the capabilities of emergent weapons systems. The employment of an amphibious functional component commander offers significant benefits, however it also carries substantial costs. Considering those costs, the command relationships that are available for the planning and execution of amphibious operations are currently adequate. As the technology and procedures required for the execution of OMFTS mature, however, and amphibious forces are able to offer a truly operational capability to the JFC, a JFAMCC acting in concert with a JFMCC and the other standing functional component commanders will be an asset well worth the cost.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Functional Component Command, Operational Maneuver From the Sea					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  28	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556



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Operational Maneuver From the Sea and Amphibious Command Relationships: Is it  
Time for a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander?

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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9 February 2004

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Navy-Marine Corps team envisioned in Sea Power 21 has the potential to offer the future Joint Force Commander (JFC) a significant capability with the application of Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS). In order to realize this potential however, the appropriate command and control structure must be available to the JFC. In a joint community that is becoming increasingly dependant on the use of functional component commanders in the execution of major operations, the need for a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander (JFAMCC) is worthy of consideration as an organizational option. As amphibious command relationships continue to evolve, the need for a JFAMCC in addition to the Navy's Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) will be dependent on the size of the conflict, the geography of the theatre, and the capabilities of emergent weapons systems. The employment of an amphibious functional component commander offers significant benefits, however it also carries substantial costs. Considering those costs, the command relationships that are available for the planning and execution of amphibious operations are currently adequate. As the technology and procedures required for the execution of OMFTS mature, however, and amphibious forces are able to offer a truly operational capability to the JFC, a JFAMCC acting in concert with a JFMCC and the other standing functional component commanders will be an asset well worth the cost.

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*Amphibious flexibility is the greatest strategic asset that a seapower can possess.*

**B.H. Liddell Hart, “The Value of Amphibious Flexibility and Forces”**

### **Introduction**

The Marine Corps’ vision of Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS)<sup>1</sup> employed through Ship to Objective Maneuver (STOM)<sup>2</sup> and acting as a component of the Navy’s Sea Power 21<sup>3</sup> strategy has the potential to revolutionize the operational level of war in the littoral regions of the world. In doing so, it will offer the Joint<sup>4</sup> Force Commander (JFC) a truly transformational capability. This potential will only be reached, however, if the appropriate command structure is in place for the JFC to effectively employ his amphibious forces. The question of whether this command structure is currently available to the JFC at the operational level, or if there is a need for more effective leadership of amphibious forces is a challenge with which the Navy and Marine Corps continue to grapple.<sup>5</sup> One possible solution to this problem is the development of a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander (JFAMCC). The employment of an amphibious functional component commander has potential benefits, but also carries significant costs. The command relationships that are currently available for the planning and execution of amphibious operations are adequate. As the technology and procedures required for the execution of OMFTS mature, however, and amphibious forces are able to offer a truly operational capability to the JFC, a JFAMCC will be an asset well worth his cost.

The doctrine governing the tactical and operational command relationships of modern amphibious operations has been evolving even longer than the doctrine governing the command relationships of what we now refer to as joint operations. The relationship between the amphibious assault forces, Marine and or Army units, and the forces of the Navy

that bring them to the amphibious objective area (AOA) and support them by fire and with logistics have been contentious since Guadalcanal<sup>6</sup> and remains so today.

A need for continued transformation of the doctrine governing command relationships including those governing amphibious operations is highlighted in JV 2020 which states that “as the nature of military operations evolves, there is a need to evaluate continually the nature of the command and control organizations, mechanisms, systems, and tools.”<sup>7</sup> Below the level of the JFC, one option that has evolved for the organization of subordinate commands is that of functional componentency.<sup>8</sup> Functional component commands incorporate forces from one or more services focused on a common functional rather than geographic mission.<sup>9</sup> This structure, as tested in Gulf War I and more recently refined in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), has the proven ability to address the complicated nature of the modern battlefield.

The relevance of a Joint Force Amphibious Component Commander equal in rank and authority with the other functional component commanders as a mechanism for fully addressing the complexity of modern amphibious operations is worthy of evaluation. This paper is intended to present a discussion of the broad considerations for introducing a JFAMCC into the doctrinal command structure available to the JFC. The discussion is rooted in joint doctrine, the evolution of modern amphibious command relationships, and the evolution of the modern functional component command structure. It will consider the influences of technology and force structure on the transformation of amphibious operations, and it will analyze examples of modern amphibious operations, the effectiveness of the command structures within those operations, and the ongoing struggle to institutionalize joint operations.

**Joint Doctrine:** As previously mentioned, current joint doctrine offers the Joint Force Commander the option of establishing functional component commands when forces from two or more Military Departments must operate in the same dimension or medium or when there is the need to accomplish a distinct aspect of an assigned mission.<sup>10</sup> The use of functional component command is a part of the Department of Defense's effort to institutionalize jointness. That effort, which is designed to increase efficiency within the military, is a work in progress. The debate over functional component command is not a new one. The history of the development of the Unified Command Plan recalls that,

“... the Services recognized that the importance of unity in military effort achieved through the unified command of US forces [in WW II]... over the next 50 years, the Unified Command Plan did adapt to the changing strategic environment and to great advances in technology, particularly the growing global reach of US forces... [b]ut there were failures...[t]he recurring difficulty lay in creating an organizational scheme that would centralize control without impinging upon what the services saw as their basic roles and functions...disputes usually pitted those who wanted commands organized by geographic areas against those who advocated forming commands according to functional groupings of forces.”<sup>11</sup>

This passage illustrates the struggle that has taken place to overcome service parochialism in the pursuit of a truly joint military culture, which in many ways parallels the struggle in the evolution of command relationships within amphibious operations. In this arena, there still exists conflict between service control and functional control. The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 set the stage for resolution of this problem and for a drive towards unity of command over joint forces. Evolving doctrine and



technology continue, however, to require an examination of the validity of one operational commander's ability to effectively control all forces in his theatre and of the mechanisms through which he accomplishes that control.

### **Development of Amphibious Command Relationships**

**CATF/CLF:** Recognizing the potential benefits and costs that employing a JFAMCC may bring requires an understanding of the historical development of command relationships within amphibious operations. Though amphibious operations have taken place since the Persians invaded Greece in 490 BC,<sup>12</sup> the development of modern amphibious doctrine began prior to World War II with the production of the *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations*.<sup>13</sup> This doctrine was quickly put to the test during World War II, and was found to be very effective. The command relationships within amphibious operations, however, required refinement that would take place throughout that war and the conflicts that would follow it.

While amphibious operations were conducted in the Central Pacific, Southwest Pacific, and the European theatres during WW II, the amphibious culture of the Central Pacific theatre eventually dominated postwar amphibious doctrine.<sup>14</sup> In the Central Pacific, multiple large-scale opposed assaults requiring extensive sea-based logistics support were employed throughout the campaign. Admiral Spruance, Commander Fifth Fleet in the Central Pacific, delegated command of the theatre's amphibious shipping to Admiral Kelly Turner. Command of the assault force was given to Marine General Holland Smith. Fortunately or unfortunately, these men clashed over the issue of who would control the amphibious troops. The question of the division of command over the forces that were required to accomplish both naval and land based missions was divisive. The issue was resolved and the doctrinal relationship of the Commander Amphibious Task Force (CATF) and Commander Landing

Force (CLF) was initiated by Capt Charles Moore, chief of staff for Admiral Spruance. Capt Moore proposed that the Marine General, designated the CLF, would command the ground forces once his headquarters was established ashore. Prior to that time, the Naval Commander, the CATF, would command all of the forces involved in the assault.<sup>15</sup> Central to this arrangement was the distinct separation of the phases of the amphibious operation by creation of a foothold ashore by the assault forces prior to their attack on the mission's true objective.

Army and Navy forces in the European theatre in essence also adopted this CATF/CLF relationship. At Normandy, General Omar Bradley and Admiral Alan Kirk agreed that the command of "Navy and Army forces of the Western Task Force, after embarkation will rest with the Naval Commander Western Task Force, until such time as the Commanding General First United States Army, General Bradley, lands and assumes command."<sup>16</sup> This past arrangement highlights the fact that command relations in amphibious operations are not just a concern for members of the Navy-Marine Corps team, but were and continue to be a primary concern for all of the services.

**Amphibs and Carriers:** While the tactical arrangement within the amphibious forces worked relatively well in WW II, the relationship between the amphibious forces and the naval forces supporting them, generally Carrier Battle Groups (CVBGs), now referred to as Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs), at times produced significant friction and distrust. Two operations in WW II highlight the challenging relationship that continues to cause problems even today.<sup>17</sup> The first operation occurred during the landing at Guadalcanal. Admiral Fletcher, commander of Expeditionary Task Force 61, who "saw himself more as a carrier commander responsible for the safety of the carriers than as an expeditionary force

commander responsible for the overall mission of seizing Guadalanal,”<sup>18</sup> withdrew his carriers from the area in the face of significant Japanese surface and air threats. This left the assault forces ashore without air or naval surface fire support and without logistics support. A second similar event occurred during the landing at Leyte. Admiral Halsey, commander of the Western Pacific Task Forces, was charged with providing air support to the landing and follow-on protection of the amphibious landing force. He was also tasked with destroying the Japanese fleet if the opportunity presented itself. The opportunity did present itself, and Admiral Halsey pursued it, leaving the amphibious forces exposed to a Japanese attack that placed the landing force in great jeopardy. This event further aggravated the relationship between the amphibious forces and the carrier battle groups tasked to support them.<sup>19</sup>

In spite of these challenges, the CATF/CLF command structure became the default for amphibious operations following WW II. In Korea, though it was successfully employed in four major amphibious operations, Pohang-Dong, Inchon, Wonsan-Iwon, and Hungnam-Wonson-Songjin-Inchon-Chinnampo, there remained friction over naval command relations throughout the war. The basic CATF/CLF relationship was understood, but significant challenges in command relations still occurred across the services and within them. Below the level of General McArthur, who was in effect the JFC, the amphibious command organization did not have continuity from one operation to the next. Significant problems arose from differences in expertise, inter-service rivalries, and lack of trust.<sup>20</sup> Some of these difficulties were similar in nature to those seen at Guadalcanal and at Leyte. Ultimately, these problems originated from a lack of unity of effort and proper span of control below McArthur’s level of command. After the initial success of the Inchon landing, he focused upon the land battle and without his close supervision, the amphibious portion of the Korean

campaign lost the focus of effort and the coordination of resources that his operational level leadership had previously brought with it.

**CWC and Maneuver Warfare:** The doctrine supporting the CATF/CLF arrangement largely formed the basis for Joint Pub 3-02 (Amphibious Operations) when it was first published in 1992.<sup>21</sup> Beginning in the 1970s however, other concepts for command of naval forces were developed in order to address the threats posed by the build-up of Soviet capabilities. One of the concepts that was introduced was a command and control architecture termed Composite Warfare Commander (CWC). This concept was designed to establish more effective coordination of different functional areas (e.g. anti-air warfare, anti-submarine warfare, etc) by assigning each its own commander.<sup>22</sup> In the 1980's, with the rapid build up of U.S. military force under President Reagan, the defensive nature of the CWC concept was expanded to embrace the new offensive mission of the CVBG.

In 1987, the Marine Corps, faced with a similar requirement to address potentially overwhelming Soviet threats in Norway and the Persian Gulf,<sup>23</sup> adopted *Maneuver Warfare* as its warfighting doctrine.<sup>24</sup> The cold war ended shortly thereafter however, and attention began turning to the littoral regions of the world. The Marine Corps' Maneuver Warfare doctrine was refocused on amphibious operations, resulting in *Operational Maneuver From the Sea*, which is the Corps' current vision for achieving decisive victory in the littorals.<sup>25</sup> Experimentation with OMFTS concepts during Navy Fleet Battle Experiments and the USMC Sea Dragon experiment in the late 1990s resulted in proposals for an Amphibious Warfare Commander (AMWC) within the CWC structure. This proposal was adopted with the hope that it would help integrate the operations of the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and the Carrier Battle Group.<sup>26</sup> Recently, the AMWC was employed within the CWC

structure under command of a Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) during Millennium Challenge 02 (MC 02). This arrangement produced mixed results due to a span of control for the JFMCC that proved to be too broad.<sup>27</sup>

**Supported / Supporting:** A significant recent change in amphibious command relationships is that of a *supported / supporting* arrangement between the CATF and the CLF. This arrangement is endorsed by the current Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations (Joint Pub 3-02). The new relationship, which by design is vague and flexible, relies upon the JFC's order for delineation. In the absence of direction from the JFC, the doctrine states that the supported / supporting relationship will be agreed upon by the CATF and CLF during the planning process. The supported commander may remain the same for the entire operation, or he may change in relation to the various events and phases of the operation. Ultimately, unless otherwise limited by the JFC, the supported commander has the authority to exercise general direction of the supporting effort. This may not sound unusual, however, it in effect means that when the CLF (a Marine or Army Officer) is designated the supported commander, he would have control of the supporting naval shipping.<sup>28</sup> The clear delineation of the transfer of command to the CLF from the CATF when the CLF has phased his headquarters ashore is no longer the only way of doing business in amphibious operations. Changes in doctrine and advances in technology now mean that the CLF may never move his command ashore. Instead, if appropriate, he can lead the mission from his headquarters afloat.

Supported / supporting and similar arrangements are currently being employed with greater frequency and are gaining acceptance. Two recent examples of ground officers with command over Navy ships include Brigadier General select Joseph Medina who will

command Expeditionary Strike Group 3 (ESG 3), the second ESG to be activated; and Brigadier General James Mattis who had command of the ships of two Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) within Task Force 58 (TF-58) during OEF.<sup>29</sup>

### **Development of Functional Component Command**

Though Unified Commands have existed since WW II, the option for a Joint Force Commander to organize along functional lines particularly with respect to land and maritime components has only recently been delineated in joint doctrine.<sup>30</sup> The individualistic branches of the armed forces have generally favored an organizational structure along service lines. The conduct of the air war during the Gulf War I, however, demonstrated the potential benefit of functional competency as the primary echelon of command under the Operational Control (OPCON)<sup>31</sup> of the JFC.

**JFACC:** The Air Force became the primary advocate for the concept of functional component command through their drive to define *Air Power*, and their link to the other services via their air arms. To assert its preeminence in air warfare, the Air Force made the establishment of the Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC) concept a priority and drove to be the lead of the multi-dimension air campaign during the first Gulf War. In doing so, the Air Force not only redefined the theory of air power, but also defined the bounds of the air warfare theatre.<sup>32</sup> The results of the Air Force's advocacy of the JFACC concept are laid out in the doctrine for Command and Control for Joint Air Operations (JP 3-30) and were evident in the role-played by the JFACC during OEF and OIF.

**JFLCC:** The Army had no Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC) in the first Gulf War because the Combatant Commander (COCOM) also directly commanded all of the land forces. Since then, the Army has recognized the importance of the functional

component commander, and has taken charge of the JFLCC concept. In concert with the Marine Corps, the Army has authored a Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook (FM 3-31),<sup>33</sup> and a joint publication defining the command and control of joint land operations is in development. According to FM 3-31, the benefits of employment of a JFLCC include improved coordination of planning and improved span of control. A JFLCC is able to integrate planning for land operations beneath the level of the JFC. Detailed planning is enhanced by the experience of the JFLCC and his staff, and allows for resolution of joint issues at the functional component level, allowing the JFC to focus on the other complex tasks within the joint operations area (JOA).<sup>34</sup>

**JFMCC:** In the same manner as the Army, the Navy employed a functional component commander during recent operations against Afghanistan and Iraq, and is working toward the development of doctrine governing the roles, responsibilities, and command structure for their slice of the functional component command pie. The Naval Warfare Development Command (NWDC) is currently developing a TACMEMO governing Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) planning and execution,<sup>35</sup> and the Joint Chiefs of Staff joint doctrine division is concurrently working to publish the doctrine covering command and control of joint maritime operations.<sup>36</sup> Of note, the command relationships of naval and assault forces as reflected in these two draft publications continue to be experimented with and developed.<sup>37</sup>

In Gulf War I, OEF, and OIF, functional component commanders were also the service component commanders with the preponderance of forces within each function. This arrangement is in accordance with the guidance provided in the Doctrine for Joint Operations (JP 3-0) and highlights the significant degree of staffing and training that is required at this

level of command and the lack of other available resources to fill the requirement. The use of service component commands as functional commands raises a question about the ability of the service command to fulfill its standing obligations during the operation, but is likely to continue as the standard in future conflicts.

**JFSOCC:** The Doctrine for Joint Operations and the Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures (JP 5-00.2) define a JFC's ability to establish functional component commanders. In addition to the JFACC, JFLCC, and JFMCC, there are provisions for a Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander (JFSOCC) who has also been actively employed in recent conflicts. These documents do not, however, limit a JFC from establishing other functional component commanders. This fact and the evolving role of the JFMCC leaves room for continued discussion of the potential benefits and costs of a JFAMCC.<sup>38</sup>

### **So Why Would a JFC Need a JFAMCC?**

The previous discussions have shown that command relationships within amphibious operations continue to evolve and that a solution to the problem of command over all of the forces required to execute successful amphibious operations in the modern theatre of war is still being pursued. Additionally, it is clear that future operational level leadership in major conflicts will likely be provided by functional component commanders. These considerations lead back to the question of the relevance of a JFAMCC.

**OMFTS:** At the center of the argument for creation of a JFAMCC is the evolving vision of OMFTS. OMFTS is focused on the maneuver of naval forces at the operational level in order to deal a decisive blow. This vision combines the physically separate mediums of sea, land, and air into one near seamless amphibious operations area (AOA) that may be best



served by a functional commander focused on exploiting it. With the exception of the JFSOCC, the existing functional component commands are generally linked to the specific medium in which they operate. OMFTS argues that the littoral region which may contain one or more AOAs is a medium in and of itself. If this is true, it may require a separate functional commander.

Many of the principles and potential benefits of OMFTS available to the JFC are not new. They were demonstrated brilliantly during Operation Chromite in the Korean War. Amphibious forces under a single unified commander came from the Mediterranean, San Diego, Sasebo, and Pusan through Inchon to key objectives well inland. The operation remained focused upon the North Korean lines of communication, an operational objective, and avoided becoming bogged down at Inchon.<sup>39</sup> Operation Chromite reinforces the perspective that amphibious operations fall under a functional area distinct from activities that take place solely on the land or upon the sea, and provides evidence of the many benefits that a JFAMCC may offer.

**Span of Control:** Perhaps the largest argument for a JFAMCC concerns span of control. Within the current functional component structure, amphibious operations fall under the span of control of the JFMCC. Just as a JFC's span of control is not adequate to effectively deal with the multiple complex tasks confronting him without establishing functional component commands,<sup>40</sup> a JFMCC during a major operation may find that his span of control is too broad to adequately fulfill his responsibilities. Missions proposed by the draft of JP 3-32 that the JFMCC will need to plan for include: sea control, power projection from sea to land, strategic sealift, forward maritime presence, mine operations, undersea operations, strike operations, fires, maritime interdictions operations, information and reconnaissance support,

force protection, theatre ballistic missile defense, and amphibious operations.<sup>41</sup> The JFMCC will obviously be task saturated. This was the case during MC 02 where he attempted to utilize the CWC structure to run the battle and found the span of control too large.<sup>42</sup> If the conflict can be influenced through the application of OMFTS in one or more AOAs within a JFC's theatre, a JFMCC may not be able to provide the supervision required to efficiently achieve the required objectives. A JFAMCC at the intermediate level of command would provide a narrower span of control over any required amphibious operations. He would be more responsive and effective for the JFC and would be able to focus on the operational objectives that OMFTS has the potential to achieve.

**Unity of Effort:** Related areas of concern that can also be addressed by a JFAMCC are those of unity of effort and prioritization of resources. Significant progress has been made in the integration of carrier and amphibious forces since Guadalcanal and Leyte, but the focus of effort for the Navy appears to be increasingly scattered by responsibilities that now include theatre missile defense and a potential requirement to function as a JFACC at sea. Though amphibious assets and operations are gaining attention within the Navy, particularly with the creation of the ESG,<sup>43</sup> the Navy remains primarily focussed upon CSG operations. Evidence of this lack of focus on integration of carrier and amphibious forces is visible in the draft of JP 3-32. In this publication, the relevance of the CWC concept outside of the big-deck centric naval task organization, specifically in its link to a broader, joint warfighting structure is conspicuously absent.<sup>44</sup> A JFAMCC assigned forces directly from the JFC and given an AOA and mission distinct from the JFMCC would overcome this traditional big-deck focus and would ensure unity of effort within the AOA. This could mean that the JFAMCC would have control of one or more CSGs during a particular phase of his

amphibious operation, ensuring the focus of combat power on the amphibious mission. Though the allocation of the JFC's resources is a zero sum game, this focus of effort has great potential to increase the effectiveness of amphibious operations and would have the added benefit of allowing the JFMCC to focus his allocated resources and effort upon his larger maritime theatre. An additional example of this lack of unity of effort occurred during OEF. Elements of TF-58, which was created by the JFMCC, were at varying times under the control of the JFLCC and the JFACC and at times their implementation reflected a lack of understanding of the value of the integrated air-ground team that the Marines employ.<sup>45</sup> A JFAMCC could help overcome this problem and ensure that the JFC is employing all of his amphibious forces in the most effective manner.

**Operational Reach and Mobility:** The actions of Task Force 58 during OEF provide the grounds for another argument in favor of a JFAMCC. That argument focuses on the significant increase in operational reach that future amphibious forces will possess. With TF-58, the JFMCC created a subordinate task force that was able to project and, with some assistance, sustain combat power over 350 nautical miles (nm) from the sea. Their efforts redefined the concept of power projection in the littorals.<sup>46</sup>

As traditionally defined, the littorals contain 75 percent of the world's population, 80 percent of the world's capitals, and nearly all major markets of international trade.<sup>47</sup> The ability to influence events throughout these areas of the world will remain critical to the United States, and the role of amphibious forces in that effort will continue to grow as access to land bases diminishes and as capabilities continue to improve. Significant technological developments that will be deployed within the next five to fifteen years include the stealthy Joint Strike Fighter with an unrefueled combat radius of over 700 nm,<sup>48</sup> the Expeditionary

Fighting Vehicle which is three times faster on the water than its predecessor,<sup>49</sup> and the much anticipated MV-22 Osprey which will have a combat radius of up to 450 nm.<sup>50</sup> These platforms, combined with advances in naval surface fire support from the Navy's planned DD-X, Advanced Gun System<sup>51</sup> and the eventual in stream offload capability of Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) with the Future Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF (F)) will make the concept of sea-basing a reality and enable an AOA to effectively cover thousands of square miles.<sup>52</sup> This technology combined with the operational leadership and command representation that a JFAMCC will provide to the JFC will enable amphibious forces to predictably accomplish the truly operational objectives that OMFTS envisions without reliance on other nations for forward basing.

### **What will it Cost to Create a JFAMCC?**

The potential benefits of developing a JFAMCC must be weighed against the costs. In addition to the financial cost of creating another operational level staff with its inherent requirements, the potential price for the employment of any additional functional component commander includes redundancy, staffing requirements, creation of new seams on the battlefield, further complication of the coordination of joint fires, and the requirement to create and disseminate new joint doctrine.

**Redundancy:** It is clear that in all contingencies short of major operations, a JFAMCC may be redundant to the JFMCC. Though the emerging JFMCC doctrine is still searching for methods to control assault forces when more than a MEB is employed, in smaller operations, the JFMCC appears capable of coordinating amphibious operations in addition to his other responsibilities. This proved to be the case during the JFMCC war game held at the Naval War College in November of 2003. The size of the problem used in the game fell short of a

major operation, and the JFMCC chose to use the ESG and CSG command elements instead of the CWC structure. The JFMCC was successful in this situation, but questions did emerge about control of assault forces larger than what amounted to two Battalion Landing Teams (BLTs).<sup>53</sup> A JFAMCC will only be required in a major operation where a JFMCC, JFLCC, JFACC, and JFSOCC are also fully employed and where the geography of the theatre is suitable for amphibious operations.

**Staffing:** One of the other major impediments to the development of a JFAMCC is the size of the staff that is required to support an operational level commander. To date, functional component staffs have been the service component staff for that theatre. The draft JFMCC TACMEMO projects the JFMCC's staff requirement for a major operation to be 250 to 350 personnel with up to one third of those personnel coming from the Marine Corps.<sup>54</sup> This not only emphasizes the size of the staff required by a functional component commander, but also it highlights a potential conflict between staffs. If for example, the commander of Marine Forces Pacific is required to stand up as a JFAMCC; not only will he need the bodies that the JFMCC may want to barrow from him, but also he will create a requirement for an entirely new group of liaison officers to support his command. This would focus yet another service component commander upon a single Joint Operations Area (JOA) within his greater area of responsibility, reducing his ability to respond to other crisis that may emerge. In the end manning is also a zero sum game, and creation of another functional component commander will require personnel from a pot that is already close to empty.

**Seams:** By creating another operational level staff in the theatre, we will create a new set of seams. These seams will require additional coordination for air and surface units to transit

and will require additional liaison officers distributed among units for horizontal coordination.<sup>55</sup> The first Gulf War offers a tactical example of the type of complications that creation of a separate AOA can incur. The Kuwaiti theatre was so small that had a traditional AOA been established to support a landing by the Amphibious Task Force (ATF), the Iraqis would have been firing from inside the AOA on I Marine Expeditionary Forces (I MEF) and Coalition forces outside the AOA. This situation would have necessitated response and cooperation between MARCENT, ARCENT, NAVCENT, and allied forces. Though there are certainly situations that require confronting this problem, in Kuwait the coordination problem that these seams would have created ultimately reduced the AOA to only a beachhead; which in turn reduced the effectiveness of the amphibious effort.<sup>56</sup>

**Joint fires:** The subject of joint fires coordination is closely related to that of seams, and is already a significant challenge. To date, long-range joint fires have been controlled through the JFACC due to the fact that aircraft were the primary means of delivering operational fires. Tomahawk, Multiple Launch Rocket Systems, and the Advanced Gun System are changing that, and will increase the degree of coordination required at the operational level.<sup>57</sup> A JFAMCC who controls an AOA that may extend from a hundred miles out to sea to several hundred miles inland will create another layer of coordination through which operational fires will have to be coordinated or at least deconflicted.

**Doctrine:** A final consideration is the creation and dissemination of the doctrine that would govern the roles and responsibilities of a JFAMCC. The Army, Navy, and Joint Chiefs of Staff doctrine divisions have been working on the documents defining JFLCC and JFMCC doctrine for years. The only document in this area that has currently made it past draft form is the Army's JFLCC Handbook. The Navy's equivalent to the JFLCC Handbook,

the JFMCC TACMEMO, has been in development for fifteen months. Including the JFMCC war game that was created to support the TACMEMO's development, approximately fifteen man-years have gone into research for the TACMEMO. Though much of this effort went into the war game, it is clear that the development of doctrine supporting a new functional component commander takes literally years to produce.<sup>58</sup> Development of any type of JFAMCC doctrine would certainly take a similar amount of time and effort before it could be introduced to the joint community.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The command relationship between amphibious forces and the naval forces that support them remains dynamic at both the tactical and operational levels. The evolution of the functional component commander as an organizational tool for the JFC is also dynamic, but has proven its worth and is accepted across the services after successful employment in Afghanistan and Iraq. The creation of a JFAMCC to join the ranks of the existing functional component commanders is not a panacea for the challenges that exist in modern amphibious command relationships. A JFAMCC may, however, offer improvements in span of control, exploitation of improved operational reach and mobility, unity of effort, and implementation of OMFTS. These improvements do not come without substantial costs. A JFAMCC would require significant staffing and would create new operational seams on the battlefield. These seams would increase the complexity of movement, communication, and joint fires coordination within the JOA. Finally, the creation of a JFAMCC would require the development of new doctrine, which in itself is a challenge that could take years.

Upon consideration, the benefits of having an operational level advocate with operational level authority and resources for the implementation of OMFTS, when the geography of a

major operation dictates, do appear to out-weigh the costs. The need for a JFAMCC, however, is not immediate. The new ESGs, TF-58 in OEF, and the November 2003 JFMCC war game show that while not perfect, the existing amphibious command relationships are adequate to control assault forces at least up to the size of a MEB when their objectives are kept at the tactical level. Additionally, the technology that is required to execute OMFTS is still five to fifteen years from implementation.

At this time, it is recommended that the Marine Corps take the lead in the development of the JFAMCC concept in the same manner that the Air Force took the lead in the development of the JFACC during the early 1990's. As the Navy's JFMCC TACMEMO demonstrates, the lead-time for development and implementation of doctrine is significant. The time that it will take for the technology required to execute OMFTS to arrive in the fleet can be used to develop the doctrine required to employ a JFAMCC and to educate the joint community on OMFTS and the JFAMCC's role in major operations.

In execution, the responsibility of JFAMCC will fall to the service or coalition partner that has the preponderance of forces involved in amphibious operations. In no way is the JFAMCC meant to be solely a Marine Corps or even Navy responsibility. The Marine Corps, however, is the service that has a vested interest in OMFTS. If the Corps hopes to fully implement this concept within a Navy that remains focused on CSG operations, it will need a JFAMCC to do it. Similarly, the potential benefit of OMFTS will only be available to the JFC if he has the operational level leadership and experience that is required to achieve it. Considering this, the creation of a JFAMCC is the next logical step to be taken in the evolution of amphibious and joint command relationships.



## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> “Operational Maneuver from the Sea,” Lkd, <http://www.dtic.mil/jv2020/omfts>, [30 December 2003], 1.
- <sup>2</sup> “Ship-to-Objective Maneuver,” Lkd, <http://www.mcwl.quantico.usmc.mil/seaviking/stom>, [30 December], II-3.
- <sup>3</sup> Vern Clark, “Sea Power 21,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, October 2002, 34.
- <sup>4</sup> The combined nature of most modern conflicts at the operational level have proven that more often than not a force will be combined rather than joint. For simplicity, this paper will address functional component commanders as joint with the understanding that they can and most likely will be combined in any future application.
- <sup>5</sup> Paul Vebber, Contractor with Northrop Grumman and lead developer of the JFMCC TACMEMO 3-32-03 currently being written by the Naval Warfare Development Command. The interview, conducted 9 January 2004, concerned the roles, mission, focus, and command and control relationships of the JFMCC in the Millennium Challenge 02 exercise and the JFMCC war game that took place in November of 2003.
- <sup>6</sup> Donald S. Inbody, “Getting Past Guadalcanal,” (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1999), 1.
- <sup>7</sup> “Joint Vision 2020,” Lkd, <http://www.dtic.mil/jv2020/omfts>, [30 December 2003].
- <sup>8</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Task Force Planning Guidance, Joint Pub 5-00.2 (Washington, D.C.: January 13, 1999), III-3-10.
- <sup>9</sup> Milan Vego, Plans and Orders, NWC 2159A (U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: September 2002), 72.
- <sup>10</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0 (Washington, D.C.: September 10, 2001), II-15, 16.
- <sup>11</sup> Ronald H. Cole, Walter S. Poole, James F. Schnabel, Robert J. Watson, and Willard J. Webb, “The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1993,” (Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C.: February 1995), 1.
- <sup>12</sup> Alfred Vagts, Landing Operations: Strategy, Psychology, Tactics, Politics, From Antiquity to 1945, (Harrisburg, PA: Military Service Publishing Company, 1952), 83.
- <sup>13</sup> Garrett J. Sullivan, “The Genesis of Amphibious Warfare Doctrine,” Military Review, May-June 1995, 95.
- <sup>14</sup> Donald Chisholm, “Negotiated Joint Command Relationships: Korean War Amphibious Operations, 1950,” Naval War College Review, Spring 2000, 117.
- <sup>15</sup> Bill Simpson, The History of the Commander Amphibious Task Force/Commander Landing Force Command Relationship, War Gaming Division, MCWL, MCCDC, Quantico Va. Lkd: [Simpsonw@mcwl.quantico.usmc.mil](mailto:Simpsonw@mcwl.quantico.usmc.mil), 10.
- <sup>16</sup> W.H.P. Blandy, “Command Relations in Amphibious Warfare,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, June 1951, 575.
- <sup>17</sup> Vebber.

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<sup>18</sup> Theodore L. Gatchel, "Eagles and Alligators: An Examination of the Command Relationships That Have Existed Between Aircraft Carriers and Amphibious Forces During Amphibious Operations," (Research Memorandum 1-97, Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1997), 10.

<sup>19</sup> E.B. Potter, Roger Fredland, and Henry H. Adams, Sea Power: A Naval History. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1981), 377-395.

<sup>20</sup> Chisolm, 65, 115.

<sup>21</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations, Joint Pub 3-02 (Washington, D.C.: February, 1992), 5.

<sup>22</sup> Timothy P. Massey, "Command and Control for Operational Maneuver From the Sea, Where Do We Go From Here?" (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1999), 5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Warfighting, MCDP 1 (Washington D.C.: 1992), 3.

<sup>25</sup> "Operational Maneuver from the Sea," Lkd, <http://www.dtic.mil/jv2020/omfts>, [30 December 2003], 1.

<sup>26</sup> Massey, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Vebber.

<sup>28</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations, Joint Pub 3-02 (Washington, D.C.: September 19, 2001), II-5, 6, 7.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Operation Enduring Freedom Combat Assessment Team Summary Report, (Washington, D.C.: No date provided), 97.

<sup>30</sup> "Joint Doctrine Hierarchy," Joint Electronic Library CD-ROM. (Washington, D.C.: June 2003) Lists JP 3-30, 3-31, 3-32. Command and Control for Joint Air Operations, Command and Control for Joint Land Operations, and Command and Control for Joint Maritime Operations. JP 3-31 and 3-32 are still in development.

<sup>31</sup> Vego, 85.

<sup>32</sup> Gary Belcher, "JFMCC – A Needed Capability or Just a New Name for Naval Business as Usual?" (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 2003), 5, 6, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army, Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook, FM 3-31 / MCWP 3-40.7, Lkd, <http://www.adtl.army.mil>, [30 December 2003], IV-7.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Naval Warfare Development Command, Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC) Planning and Execution, TACMEMO 3-32-03 (draft), (Newport, RI: 23 July 2003).

<sup>36</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Command and Control of Joint Maritime Operations, Joint Pub 3-32 (draft), (Washington, D.C.: 25 June 2003).

<sup>37</sup> Vebber.

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<sup>38</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures, Joint Pub 5-00.2 (Washington, D.C.: 13 January 1999), III 1-10.

<sup>39</sup> “Operational Maneuver from the Sea,” Lkd, <http://www.dtic.mil/jv2020/omfts>, [30 December 2003], 7.

<sup>40</sup> Headquarters Department of the Army, Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook, FM 3-31 / MCWP 3-40.7, Lkd, <http://www.adtl.army.mil>, [30 December 2003], IV-7.

<sup>41</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Command and Control of Joint Maritime Operations, Joint Pub 3-32 (draft) (Washington, D.C.: 25 June 2003), III-1, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Vebber.

<sup>43</sup> Kindall King and Tom Holmes, “Expeditionary Strike Group,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, March 2003, 90-95.

<sup>44</sup> Belcher, 11.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, Operation Enduring Freedom Combat Assessment Team Summary Report (Washington, D.C.: No date provided), 18.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 42, 43.

<sup>47</sup> Johnathan Hull, “Sell it to the Marines,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, October 1997, 67, 68.

<sup>48</sup> Loren B. Thompson, “Transformation vs. Tradition,” Sea Power, June 2002, 34.

<sup>49</sup> Cindy Fischer, “The Marine Corps Latest Version of the Amphibious Fighting Vehicle,” Lkd, <http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink.mcn2000.nsf>, [20 January 2003], 1-2.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph E. George, “MV-22 Capabilities, Employment, and Escort Tactics,” Marine Corps Gazette, May 2001, 36.

<sup>51</sup> Edward Lundquist, “Advanced Gun System for the DD-X to Expand Commander’s Options,” National Defense, June, 2003, 21-24. The DD-X will employ a gun system that will launch precision guided munitions, the Long Range Land Attack Projectile, up to 100 miles. The intent is to provide fire support for Marine and Army forces as they move further inland.

<sup>52</sup> John M. Curatola and Robert Bovey Jr., “The Future Maritime Prepositioning Force,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, November 2001, 87-90.

<sup>53</sup> Vebber.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth A. Krogman, “Integrating the Joint Force: Improving Coordination Among the Component Commanders,” (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI.: 16 May 2003 ), 5-7.

<sup>56</sup> Simpson, 17.

<sup>57</sup> Krogman, 5.

<sup>58</sup> Vebber.

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